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EAP PRESS GUIDANCE

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CHINA: HELPING IRAN BUILD MISSILE FACTORY

Q: Any comment on the report that China is helping Iran build a ballistic missile factory?

A: -- WE HAVE SEEN THIS REPORT. WE CANNOT CONFIRM IT.

ASSISTANCE BY ANY OUTSIDE COUNTRY IN CONSTRUCTION OF SUCH A FACILITY WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE OF GREAT CONCERN TO US. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR FOR SIGNS OF SUCH INVOLVEMENT, AS IN ALL CASES WHICH COULD AFFECT MISSILE PROLIFERATION.

-- WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER THE GLOBAL DANGERS POSED BY THE PROLIFERATION OF BALLISTIC MISSILES AND THEIR COMPONENT TECHNOLOGY.

-- WE HAVE EXPRESSED THESE CONCERNS TO THE CHINESE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, MOST RECENTLY DURING PRESIDENT BUSH'S TRIP TO BEIJING.

-- CHINESE LEADERS HAVE RESPONDED THAT THEY WILL TAKE A PRUDENT AND RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE REGARDING WEAPONS SALES, INCLUDING THE SALE OF BALLISTIC MISSILES.

-- WE BELIEVE THE PRC UNDERSTANDS THE CONCERNS WE HAVE EXPRESSED, AND OUR CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THEM THUS FAR PROVIDES A BASIS FOR OPTIMISM WITH REGARD TO THE PROLIFERATION OF BALLISTIC MISSILES.

-- THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT CHINESE IRBM'S HAVE BEEN SENT TO ANY COUNTRY BESIDES SAUDI ARABIA, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY.

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